

flat structure with a wetting agent, wherein the wetting agent is N-oleoyl-sarcosinate.

Kindly amend claim 42 as follows:

42. The test strip of claim 41 wherein the overlay comprises one or several flat[-shaped] overlay elements which are attached to the test strip in such a way that a part of their surface can be displaced freely relative to the strip surface when the test strip is bent towards a side on which the overlay is located.

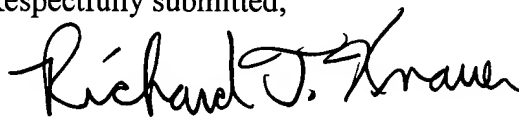
Kindly add new claims 50-54 as follows:

50. A spreading material comprising a porous flat structure impregnated with a wetting agent, wherein the wetting agent is N-oleoyl-sarcosinate, wherein the spreading material comprises 0.01 to 2.0 % by weight of N-oleoyl-sarcosinate relative to the weight of the material before impregnation.
51. A spreading material comprising a porous flat structure impregnated with a wetting agent, wherein the wetting agent is N-oleoyl-sarcosinate, wherein the porous flat structure comprises a textile sheet material made of monofilaments or corresponding multifilament yarns.
52. A spreading material comprising a porous flat structure impregnated with a wetting agent, wherein the wetting agent is N-oleoyl-sarcosinate, wherein the porous flat structure comprises a fabric or fleece material with a weight per unit area of 10 to 200 g/m<sup>2</sup>.
53. A spreading material comprising a porous flat structure impregnated with a wetting agent, wherein the wetting agent is N-oleoyl-sarcosinate, wherein the porous flat structure has at least one of a thickness of 20 to 200  $\mu\text{m}$  and a pore volume of 30 to 85%.
54. A process for producing a spreading material comprising the steps of providing a porous flat structure and impregnating the porous flat structure with a wetting agent, wherein the wetting agent is N-oleoyl-sarcosinate and is applied such that a coating of 0.01 to 2.0% by

weight of the applied wetting agent relative to the weight of the material before impregnation remains on the porous material.

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims presented in this continued prosecution application are allowable. Early allowance of the claims is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Richard T. Knauer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

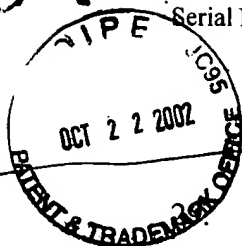
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(Twice Amended) A test strip comprising a spreading material, the spreading material comprising a porous flat structure impregnated with a wetting agent, wherein the wetting agent is N-oleoyl-sarcosinate.

35. (Twice Amended) The test strip of claim 29 wherein the spreading material comprises 0.01 to 2.0 % by weight of N-oleoyl-sarcosinate relative to the weight of the material before impregnation.
36. (Twice Amended) The test strip of claim 29 wherein the porous flat structure comprises a textile sheet material made of monofilaments or corresponding multifilament yarns.
37. (Twice Amended) The test strip of claim 29 wherein the porous flat structure comprises a fabric or fleece material with a weight per unit area of 10 to 200 g/m<sup>2</sup>.
38. (Twice Amended) The test strip of claim 29 wherein the porous flat structure has at least one of a thickness of 20 to 200  $\mu$ m and a pore volume of 30 to 85%.
39. (Twice Amended) A process for producing a test strip comprising a spreading material comprising the steps of providing a test strip comprising a porous flat structure and impregnating the porous flat structure with a wetting agent, wherein the wetting agent is N-oleoyl-sarcosinate.
40. The process of claim 39 wherein the wetting agent is applied such that a coating of 0.01 to 2.0% by weight of the applied wetting agent relative to the weight of the material before impregnation remains on the porous material.
41. A test strip comprising a flexible flat support on which one or several test fields are arranged next to one another, wherein said test fields carry one or several detection layers stacked on top of one another, and wherein the test fields are

covered by an overlay made of a spreading material comprising a porous flat structure impregnated with a wetting agent, wherein the wetting agent is N-oleoyl-sarcosinate.

42. (Twice Amended) The test strip of claim 41 wherein the overlay comprises one or several flat overlay elements which are attached to the test strip in such a way that a part of their surface can be displaced freely relative to the strip surface when the test strip is bent towards a side on which the overlay is located.

43. The test strip of claim 42 wherein the test fields are covered by the parts of the overlay elements that can be displaced freely relative to the strip surface.

44. The test strip of claim 42 wherein the overlay comprises two overlay elements whose parts that can be displaced freely relative to the strip surface face one another and overlap.

45. The test strip of claim 44 wherein the overlap covers two test fields.

46. The test strip of claim 41 wherein the test strip comprises two single or multilayer test fields for the same or different diagnostically usable analytes, said test fields directly adjoining one another or being separated by a gap.

47. The test strip of claim 41 wherein the arrangement of detection layers and overlays on the test strip is covered with an inert flat material in such a manner that a space only remains free that is adequate for sample application in an overlap region of the overlay elements viewed in the direction of the longitudinal axis of the test strip.

48. The test strip of claim 41 wherein the hydrophilicity, transparency and liquid conducting capacity of the overlay material are matched in such a manner that a sample excess is not taken up by the strip.

49. The test strip of claim 41 wherein the test strip comprises one test field which

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supports a monofilament spreading material which is larger than the test field and is attached to the support on both sides of the test field by means of a spacer having the thickness of the test field whereby the part of the spreading material which extends beyond the test field is covered by sample-impermeable material so that a sample application is only possible on that part of the spreading material which rests on the test field.

50. (New) A spreading material comprising a porous flat structure impregnated with a wetting agent, wherein the wetting agent is N-oleoyl-sarcosinate, wherein the spreading material comprises 0.01 to 2.0 % by weight of N-oleoyl-sarcosinate relative to the weight of the material before impregnation.
51. (New) A spreading material comprising a porous flat structure impregnated with a wetting agent, wherein the wetting agent is N-oleoyl-sarcosinate, wherein the porous flat structure comprises a textile sheet material made of monofilaments or corresponding multifilament yarns.
52. (New) A spreading material comprising a porous flat structure impregnated with a wetting agent, wherein the wetting agent is N-oleoyl-sarcosinate, wherein the porous flat structure comprises a fabric or fleece material with a weight per unit area of 10 to 200 g/m<sup>2</sup>.
53. (New) A spreading material comprising a porous flat structure impregnated with a wetting agent, wherein the wetting agent is N-oleoyl-sarcosinate, wherein the porous flat structure has at least one of a thickness of 20 to 200  $\mu$ m and a pore volume of 30 to 85%.
54. (New) A process for producing a spreading material comprising the steps of providing a porous flat structure and impregnating the porous flat structure with a wetting agent, wherein the wetting agent is N-oleoyl-sarcosinate and is applied such that a coating of 0.01 to 2.0% by weight of the applied wetting agent relative to the weight of the material before impregnation remains on the porous material.